

REMARKS

The Examiner is thanked for the careful review of the application as set forth in the outstanding office action. Reconsideration of the application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following discussion is respectfully requested.

The objection to the specification has been addressed by amendment of paragraph 0023 in the manner suggested by the Examiner.

Claim 39 has been rejected as being anticipated by Gudow. Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection has been mooted by the foregoing amendments to Claim 39. Claim 39 recites:

a sensor for detecting and generating a sensor signal indicative of a close proximity or contact condition of the movable clamp member relative to the surface of the work piece; and

an actuator system for moving the movable clamp member toward the surface of the work piece under a low impact force until the clamp member comes into contact with the surface of the work piece, and in response to said sensor signal, while holding the clamp member in a substantially stationary position relative to the surface of the work piece, applying a clamp force greater than said low impact force with the clamp member against the surface of the work piece during a drilling stroke, and for moving the clamp member away from the surface at the end of a drilling stroke.

The foregoing amendments to Claim 39 are fully supported by applicant's specification, e.g. at paragraphs 38, 40, 42-46 of the specification. Gudow does not disclose a sensor as recited in Claim 39, or that the pneumatic device 15 is operated and actuated as recited in Claim 39. Gudow appears to apply the full clamping force with the pneumatic device 15 as it comes into contact with the work piece surface, as described for example in applicant's specification at lines 1-6 of

paragraph 38. Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection of Claim 39 should be withdrawn.

Claims 40-43 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claims 40-42 have been rewritten in independent form, and Claim 43 depends from Claim 42. Claims 40-43 are in condition for allowance.

Claims 1-38 and 44-51 have been allowed.

A new Claim 52 has been added, which depends from Claim 39. Claim 52 recites that the actuator comprises a pneumatic actuator, and the sensor signal triggers an increase in pressure from a low pressure in the actuator to a high pressure in the actuator to apply the clamping force. This claim is fully supported by applicant's specification, e.g. at paragraph [0038], and is also in condition for allowance.

It is noted that a request for a corrected filing receipt was submitted on August 23, 2006, to correct a spelling error in applicant's last name. The request has apparently not been acted upon. Applicant respectfully requests that the request be granted, and the spelling of applicant's name corrected for the record.

Conclusion:

The outstanding objection and rejection have been addressed, and the application is in condition for allowance. Such favorable reconsideration is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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